BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Darren I. Gamayo

Darren Gamayo was born October 12, 1963 in Honoka'a, Hawai'i. His father, George G. Gamayo, was an employee of Pā'auhau Sugar Company (eventually through mergers called Hāmākua Sugar Company) and his mother, Irene Chong Gamayo, worked at Mauna Kea Beach Hotel. After graduating from Honoka'a High School in 1981, he joined the Hawai'i National Guard.

In 1982, he began working for the sugar company as a knapsack sprayer for $5.65 an hour. He was laid off in 1994, after working the final harvest of Hāmākua Sugar Company.

Gamayo presently works as a security guard at Mauna Kea Beach Hotel. He lives in Pā'auhau with his wife, Dardenella, and two children.

Tape No. 26-21-1-97

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Darren I. Gamayo (DG)

Honoka'a, Hawai'i

January 16, 1997

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This an interview with Darren Gamayo for the Hāmākua, Ka'ū families oral history project on January 16, 1996, and we're at his in-laws' home in Honoka'a, Hawai'i. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay Darren, let's start. First, Darren, tell me when and where you were born.

DG: I was born October 12, 1963 at Honoka'a Hospital.

WN: October 12, '63.

DG: Yeah.

WN: Okay, and then what was your father [George G. Gamayo] doing in Honoka'a?

DG: Ho, that time, yeah, he was working for the sugar company already. I think at that time was Pā'auhau Sugar [Company].

WN: Do you know what kind of work . . .

DG: At that time, I remember he was driving cane truck, as far as I remember.

WN: What about your mother [Irene Chong Gamayo]?

DG: My mom was working down at Mauna Kea Beach Hotel. That time, the hotel just opened. Well, it opened couple years after. But she was working---that time, well, I guess was the ranch house at Mauna Kea Ranch, before the hotel opened. Other than that, (chuckles) they used to just do taro farming down Waipi'o Valley and take care macadamia nuts in the nut orchard behind our house.

WN: Pā'auhau?

DG: No, out in Honoka'a, right in Honoka'a. They were living in Honoka'a that time yet.

WN: So actually your father had three jobs.

DG: Yeah, well, he used to just do taro farming to help out. Was a family one at that time. So he just was doing that on the side.

WN: You folks used to help him at all?

DG: Yeah, well, I was real young that time. (Laughs) So my older brother and my two sisters used to always help him. Like I said, that time I was real young so I could only. . . . (Laughs) I used to only go down there for play.

(Laughter)

WN: You're the youngest?

DG: Yeah.

WN: Out of how many?

DG: Well, from my dad, yeah, I'm the youngest. Four of us.

WN: So you were mostly—you went down there, though, with your brothers and sisters?

DG: Yeah, we used to always go down early in the morning. We used to go down on weekends.

WN: Did you ever help at all, though? Later on when you got older?

DG: Yeah, then, like had one big flood, I guess in the [19]70s. After that he gave up.

(Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

WN: And the macadamia nuts, what, you helped that?

DG: Yeah, mostly in that, that is lot more easy [than taro], I mean 'cause all they do (chuckles) is go around, pick 'em up [from the ground], and throw 'em in the bucket. Dad used to give me a small bucket for help. And that was, like, right behind our house. Was just a small field, small area.

WN: Do you know where he took the nuts?

DG: Yeah, we used to take 'em down Haina, to I guess was Hawaiian Holiday [i.e., Hawaiian Macadamia Plantation]. Yeah, used to take 'em down there that time.

WN: How many trees you folks had at the time?

DG: That time, had quite a bit of trees. Like maybe about half an acre, the orchard.

WN: So you guys lived plantation?

DG: Yeah, most of the time we was brought up through plantation lifestyle.

WN: So where was this?

DG: We moved down to Pā'auhau that time. My dad and mom got divorced, that's why. So that time I was only four years. So first time we moved with my dad's and then from there, he got a plantation home down in Pā'auhau.

WN: So what was it like growing up over there?

DG: Pā'auhau was okay at first. You know, we had to get adjusted to the lifestyle from moving up Honoka'a down to there.

WN: Was it big difference?

DG: Not really. I had some friends already that I was going school with that time, from kindergarten. So they were living down there. Was okay. I remember when we used to go play, you know, like in the gulches, up the park and stuff like that.

WN: What you guys did down the gulches?

DG: (Chuckles) We used to just go hiking. We used to have ponds and rivers. We used to just go in there and swim. The place we was living, get [civil defense] fallout shelter down there. So the trail used to lead right to the fallout shelter in the caves. So we used to go in there too, in the cave.

WN: Is it still over there? The fallout shelter?

DG: Yeah. But as far as the trail, I don't know. You probably going have to cut trail. But I heard of some guys go down there (chuckles) still yet.

WN: Besides that, what else you did to have good fun as a kid?

DG: Oh, the plantation used to have that [irrigation] sprinklers, right? That big sprinklers. So (on the) hot days, we used to run around, go in the fields, (laughs) ride our bikes through there and run through there. And then they used to have ponds, reservoir ponds. We used to call 'em the round pond. Was like in the middle of the cane field, above the camp. And we used to go inside there, swimming. You know, like nowadays, the stuff that the kids doing, from what we used to do, real different. We used to go bike riding, all around, go on the lower roads. Or used to walk down to the—that time, was the old Pā'auhau [sugar] mill going yet. So we used to always watch the cane trucks and the mill run. And that time was not that strict. Everybody was kind of close, eh? So the supervisors, that was the *luna*s they called that, the foremen used to take us around, walk around. (Laughs) Go watch how they process the sugar and stuff. We used to always tell, "Oh, when we grow up, that's what we like do."

I remember used to always get the parties. Everyone, all the camp used to get together, when they used to get the plantation get-togethers. And the union [International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union] used to always come around, too. Every Christmas holiday, they used to give—whatever kids you have in your family, they used to make goodie bags and stuff.

WN: Was the union or the plantation?

DG: The union, and the plantation used to make something too, you know. I think that the union, you know, was the. . . . Could have been the plantation, but I think was the union, that time. And then I remember when they used to go on strike.

WN: Yeah, what was that like?

DG: I remember my dad—I never hardly used to understand—but I remember (laughs) my dad used to be home, and they used to make these bamboo shacks. You know, all the Filipinos and the camp people used to make bamboo shacks. And that was like the picket line. And the road that lead down to the mill, our house was only about twenty yards above. (Chuckles) So they used to set up one of those bamboo shacks right below our house. And we used to always walk down there. And then certain time of the day, union used to give food and stuff. So I remember . . .

WN: Soup kitchen.

DG: Yeah. And then they used to give away canned goods and stuff. So I remember standing in line with my dad, you know, go with the empty boxes and waiting for food be given out to the families.

Like I say, I hardly used to understand the purpose of why they was doing that. I used to think, hey, I wonder why they doing that, and what is one strike. That time never used to be real intense. I mean, as soon as the guys do 'em, they go on strike, and then might not take long, then. My dad used to go back work. (Chuckles) We used to always hear the [plantation mill] whistle go off.

WN: Your friends were all [children of] plantation workers?

DG: Yeah. Most of the time. I remember (chuckles) we used to always go play in the park. And all the plantation kids---you know, like after they lawnmower the park, get that grass piles. And so we used to always---used to call it "grass master." Where you chase the guys in the grass. (Laughs) Maybe you bomb 'em, then they out, and later on, (laughs) gotta chase all the kids. And other than that, we always end up playing.

And what was funny, was we used to play from—especially in the summer—from early in the morning till late, till you cannot see already. And then my friend's mom used to be way down, and she used to have one cow bell, this lady, Mrs. Enanoria. And she used to always ring the bell. And you could hear her from way down. You can see her, was real clear. All that camps that time . . .

WN: Mrs. who?

DG: Enanoria.

WN: Enanoria, oh.

DG: Yeah. She was the postmaster before, way back, down Pā'auhau. And we were neighbors

with them. And so her son, Terry, and I were pretty close. We were good friends. Always playing. You know, when come real dark, used to always hear the mom calling, "Terry!" and ringing the bell, that cow bell. "Eh, come on Terry! Come home, *bocha!"* (WN laughs.)

And gotta run, "Eh Terry, you gotta go home."

And my dad used to always tell me, "When you hear Mrs. Enanoria call, Boy, time for come home too."

WN: How far away was the park from your house?

DG: Gee, that time it look far, but now you know it ain't.

(Laughter)

DG: It was like, maybe—maybe from here down to the---down the road. You know down to the highway right down here.

WN: About a hundred yards?

DG: Maybe little bit more. Maybe two, three [hundred] yards there down the road. And when we used to go home before, used to get like, so many trails go through that camp and everybody used it, you know. They wasn't worried about who passed through their yard or garden. See, I remember going through all the gates and we knew all the trails. Used to have one trail lead from like, way up the first row of the camp. Lead right all the way down to where we live. And you could see the whole trail, so we used to ride the bike straight down that trail. And used to go straight down, take us to our houses. And used to have plenty houses, though. I mean a lot more.

WN: Was there a name for your camp?

DG: Yeah. Well, our camp was---our place where we used to live, what we used to call that place now? I think we used to call 'em Lower Camp. And then the middle camp, we used to call 'em Filipino Camp 'cause that whole row had . . .

WN: All Filipinos?

DG: Yeah, all Filipinos. And then they used to just call Upper Row Camp, and then they had the supervisor camp, we used to call 'em *Haole* Camp before. Where the supervisors all live.

WN: The Lower Camp was mostly---was different, was mixed?

DG: Yeah mix. And even Upper Camp was mixed, but like Filipino Camp had only Filipinos.

WN: Was Filipino families or bachelors?

DG: Had some Filipino families and—had quite a few bachelors though. In fact, majority of 'em was bachelors. Yeah, that's how.

WN: So you hung around mostly Lower Camp then, because the kids eh?

DG: Yeah, yeah. A couple of us that used to play together down there. And then they had the summer fun program too that time, which was good. They had one little store too before, and one gas station that time. So not too bad. That's when we used to always—had that hall, eh? The hall still standing. So we used to have our summer fun inside there, I remember.

WN: Had organized sports at all?

DG: Yeah. Had Pā'auhau Little League. So I played for the Little League team as I grew older. Yeah, we had one team. What else they had down there? Yeah, I think that's about it.

WN: So what's down there now? Houses mostly still there?

DG: Yeah, get quite a few houses. About eighty I think, 'cause my wife [Dardenella Gamayo] work for the post office now down there. So I think she said, if I'm not mistaken, about eighty-five houses.

WN: So you guys live in the house you grew up in, now?

DG: No. That house that we grew up in, they broke 'em down already. It was by the gulch. But the one I live in now, my other good friend used to live inside there. But the house still had look the same. Same color paint, everything. The most they did was paint the inside for now. You know what I mean, the only difference. But other than that, the outside of the house is same.

WN: Okay, and then, so what schools you went?

DG: All to Honoka'a [High and Elementary School], yeah. We used to catch the bus. The bus stop used to be down there by the (hall). In fact was the same place right up until couple months ago then we told the kids wait by the post office. But we used to wait there at that time, you know when rain and stuff. But yeah, went to Honoka'a [High and Elementary] School right through.

WN: You went right through?

DG: Yeah.

WN: High school?

DG: Yeah. Right through high school.

WN: And what year you grad high school?

DG: [Nineteen] eighty-one.

WN: [Nineteen] eighty-one?

DG: Yeah. And then in 19—what was?—1974 my dad got remarried. And I think was '75 I think

we moved, he try—you know they close up Pā'auhau Sugar [Company] eh, before. I think '74 ['72]. Then they merge into Haina. That time was Haina mill. Then we moved from Pā'auhau. We moved to Haina camp in, I think, '75 was.

WN: So they closed down Pā'auhau, the mill and everything, and they merged with . . .

DG: Yeah, they merged with [Honoka'a Sugar Company in 1972].

WN: So how you felt about moving?

DG: The first time was (chuckles) kind of hard. That time, when they had the Little League teams, wherever you move you gotta play for that team. I mean that's what they used to say. So I had to play that time---was CYO, Catholic Youth [Organization]. And I played for them little while, then after that they said that I could come back Pā'auhau, but the only thing I used to [catch a] ride.

In fact, before [when] I was living Pā'auhau we used to deliver [news]paper too. Me and my brother. And when I moved to Haina we had to give all that up. And then I used to ride my bicycle on the lower road to go practice—baseball practice. I knew guys from Haina but was real different eh, you know? All my friends was in Pā'auhau.

WN: How far was Haina from Pā'auhau?

DG: How far was? About (pause) little over two miles, I think was. We'd clock (the distance) one time, my wife and I.

WN: I guess as a kid though with a bicycle . . .

DG: Yeah, that's pretty far. When I used to get off baseball practice, aw! How far I gotta go all the way home. And at that time my dad used to work. My sister, she had her boyfriend Leroy [Alip] that time. They were going together and they were staying with us for little while, then they got married. And then didn't take long—they moved to Honoka'a. They had the apartments. And then just my brother and I used to be, but my brother, you know they was *pau* school already. I was like in my teenage years already. So at that time I used to—you know after I meet friends and stuff, we used to basically do the same thing, eh? You know, go walking up the cane field, up to the reservoirs.

WN: You found any differences in, you know, just lifestyle from Pā'auhau and Haina?

DG: Yeah, after my sister folks grew up they went on their own. And then my brother used to end up staying with them sometimes 'cause he was working Mauna Kea [Beach Hotel] right out of high school. And then just my dad and I was that time—he was still waiting for his [second] wife to come from the Philippines. And then I remember (he) always used to have to work. I was like only twelve or thirteen I think. I had to kind of learn how to do things on my own, some responsibilities.

So what we used to do before? (Dad) used to cook before (he went) to work, and he told me, "Make sure you eat kind of early." 'Cause he never used to like I touch the stove. But he never used to know that I used to touch though, you know, I used to go cook. We go make

hot dogs, yeah, and stuff like that (laughs). Then after a while he kind of knew. He used the stove one time 'cause I guess I forgot something or I never wipe (up), and he scold me. But he told me he no mind I using 'em, but make sure I watch the stove. And never leave the stove. I used to always cook my own and stuff.

And then we used to get like picnics, you know, my friends and I down there. We used to get together on weekends or summertime. So I made some friends there, and so they said, "Eh, you know we going make picnic." So his mom used to make lunch, like that. We used to have like this grassy area. And we used to make like clubhouse. So his dad used to help, and my dad used to come and help build a place for us to play.

And then we used to go down to the [sugar] mill too, down in the Haina mill. Watch all the trucks come by. Then certain days we used to walk down right before my dad get off work. They used to walk down, and we used to always talk story with them. Used to come in from the field with the labor trucks, and all the workers, "Ey, Gamayo! Look your boy *stay* here." And like even that time, the supervisors was pretty cool that time. You know, now they strict, eh? So they used to let us go out, jump on the labor trucks, then go riding around, or go riding up—they used to bring us back from down there. Throw our bikes on top the truck with all the guys and we used to always stop all by the houses dropping off all the guys for work. I used to always do that with my dad, then I used to always wait for him come home. 'Cause I tell, "Ey, what you get for eat Dad?"

And used to always have---they had that old round—used to call 'em *kaukau tin*s, old round ones before, with the rice on the bottom, and that little plate and the cover. So my dad always used to keep little bit. He know I like eat something so he said, "Here Boy, get something for eat." And oh, he used to bring all kind.

WN: So from school you went home on your own, and you was by yourself at home?

DG: Yeah, when he worked that three to eleven [P.M.] shifts. And then my sister used to always come down check on me. Or sometimes I used to go up [to sister's house]. But I hardly used to like go up before. I used to stay home. Like my friends and the family, with the neighbors, was kind of tight, so they used to always come over visit, like that. Check on how we doing. So no was too bad.

WN: When you moved to Haina, was it different in terms of what the plantation offered for the workers or, you know like social things, parties, and things like that?

DG: Yeah. I no remember too much parties going to in Haina. They used to have like the tournaments down there, baseball tournaments all the time, softball tournaments. That was like the main park eh? 'Cause never have all these new parks. So all the tournaments used to be down there. Used to be loaded with cars, all the way up the hill almost, cars for the tournament. But other than that, as far as plantation get-togethers like that, hardly, hardly remember, those days down Haina. After the merge and stuff, was kind of different. You could see the difference.

WN: So you hung around with different kids then, when you moved?

DG: Yeah, after a while, like I said, took a while. I used to get tired riding all the way back

Pā'auhau. I used to ride every day just for play 'cause I missed my friends. And then after a while, "Oh, this is getting tired," so I made friends and they used to have bicycles and mini-bikes. So sometime we used to go to Pā'auhau and go play with them. Then other than that, after a while they made the new subdivision up here, so lot of them moved out. So again, I had to try find ways to *da kine,* to try keep myself occupied. Then I'd end up coming Honoka'a, playing with the kids up here 'cause, whoever I made friends [with] in Haina they [eventually] moved up to Honoka'a, the subdivision down here. So I used to come with my bicycle up to Honoka'a. And no more like ponds, round ponds and stuff down Haina. So we used to come up to the swimming pool, eh?

WN: Oh, you mean the county pool?

DG: Yeah, the county pool. 'Cause Haina no more like the ponds, and the gulches and stuff. Used to have a little gulch but not like Pā'auhau eh? The deep kind. Only when the water used to run like that, we used to play in there.

WN: You folks used to do fishing or hunting, stuff like that?

DG: Yeah. Had this old---this guy used to live behind us. He still living, Quintin Martinez—he was working in the [sugar] mill down there [Haina]. So he used to take me fishing with him, hunting. Anything, we used to do. So more my dad didn't really worry 'cause he knew I was going be with them all the time. And they didn't have kids or anything that's why. So they used to always take me and this other girl—you know Dominic Yagong, the one who just [recently was elected to the Hawai'i County Council]?

WN: Yeah, yeah.

DG: He has a younger sister, so we always used to be together. He used to always take us, that family. Go all around. That's why I used to go fishing, hunting, that time. But other than that, you know, my dad wasn't a fisherman, or hunter, or anything. So what we know now is what we learn on our own or through my in-laws. But after a while me and my brother used to go fishing. He had his own car, then he started getting his things together.

WN: So when you graduated Honoka'a, what did you do after graduation?

DG: I went straight---I joined the [Hawai'i] National Guard. I was in the guard since high school, since I age seventeen. We graduated in June—in July I went up for my basic training, went in the service little while.

WN: What year was this? What year you grad?

DG: [Nineteen] eighty-one.

WN: Oh '81.

DG: Yeah.

WN: So you went up, okay.

DG: So I went to the Mainland for basic training. I was gone about four months. Then I came back and I was staying with my sister folks, Leroy folks again. (Chuckles) In fact, almost right through my life. More toward the end of high school I ended up staying with them my junior, senior year. With Kayleen folks. 'Cause my stepmom came from the Philippines and they pretty busy, so. . . . And my sister folks had their son, the baby by that time. So I used to always hang around with them yeah? When I came back from basic training, then I stayed with Leroy folks, gee, right up until '85 I think, until I met her. (Laughs)

WN: Darde. (Laughs)

DG: Yeah. Until I met Darde. I stayed Pa'auilo little while. [Nineteen] eighty-four I moved to Pa'auilo. I started working for the [Davies Hāmākua] Sugar Company in—I came back in October—and I started working for them, for the sugar company, in March of '82.

WN: March of '82?

DG: Yeah, I started working.

WN: What did you do?

DG: I started off a knapsack sprayer. Poison, (chuckles) with the poison gangs. I worked there for about a year and a half, then . . .

WN: Common job yeah? Lot of guys started with poison.

DG: Yeah.

WN: That's like the first job?

DG: Yeah, just like you know, it's the bottom.

WN: How much you got paid, you remember?

DG: That time I got paid $5.65, I think, an hour. Yeah, $5.65 an hour. Then after a while we got raised to $6.80 I think was.

WN: So knapsack sprayer was your first job?

DG: Yeah, I worked there like, little over [one] year. 'Cause that time was hard, eh? Every time get one job posting, you apply for 'em and the seniority guys used to always get 'em. After a while came to the point where was coming like, good fun kind. 'Cause we was young yet. You know, strong, and I just came back from training, so I was pretty top shape. Yeah, used to keep in shape at that time.

WN: Was full time?

DG: Yeah. I had like three months' probation, then they hired me full time. But was pretty fast to get the probationary period compared to nowadays. Then when I was in the knapsack they used to TT me. You know, temporary transfer to the planting department as a crewman to go

and plant the cane. So I was doing that, then after when the job got open, then I had pretty much seniority. So I got in over there, the planting department. So I stayed there till—what was it?—'89?

WN: That was raise in pay?

DG: Yeah, raise in pay. Yeah. Actually I stayed with that department, the planting department, till '89. From '83, I think. Like I said, I stayed with them till '89. But in that time, used to have like tractor operator [job] open so, I became one finger-lift operator.

WN: How you learn?

DG: Just through (chuckles)---I used to just go ride with the operators. They used to tell me, "Ey, you like drive?"

I said, "How you drive this?" Then he just show me everything. Then slowly I used to just fool around, and pretty much simple became. Then when they used to move equipment, I used to just go down and help them move their equipment up to the field, because operators always used to bring their cars to the field. So we used to start at the top of the field, and we used to be like almost *pau* work. So they used to just drive to the top and tell me, "Eh, go pick up my machine. Bring my machine over." So I bring 'em all the way up. That's how I pretty much learn. They used to tell me go learn how to load the baskets. (Shannon Tomas), that guy used to show me everything. And that's how I started learning. And same with all the machines, the planting machines and stuff. Then I became supervisor, temporary supervisor little while.

WN: For planting?

DG: Yeah, for the planting department 'cause I was there so long. And after a while they started cutting back, and from that time already I kind of saw the plantation getting into trouble. You know what I mean? But I figure, eh, going still hang on 'cause all this sugar, what they going do with 'em? You know, all the mill and stuff.

WN: So when you started in '82—I know in '84 Francis Morgan took over.

DG: Yeah, was still Davies that time.

WN: Davies Hāmākua [Sugar Company], then Francis Morgan [took over in 1984 to form Hāmākua Sugar Company].

DG: Francis Morgan.

WN: You notice any changes at that time?

DG: Not really. They started to build all kind stuffs. You know, try to improve or make different kind experiments with the sugar. But I guess hardly used to work. Certain things used to come out okay, but other than that, hardly any changes. I guess that's when they wanted to cut back.

WN: Anybody get laid off you know? That you knew of?

DG: Yeah. Actually we had the first layoff [i.e., furlough] in—what year was? [Nineteen] eighty-six? [Nineteen] eighty-six or '87, I remember my wife and I was living down at apartments. That's when they had the first [furlough], and that was right before the [Christmas] holidays. Like was one three-week [furlough]. So I was thinking, oh no. I wonder how come they laying off? Then they had all kind meetings. That's when they started having meetings.

So Morgan was running 'em for like two, three years, then started getting trouble already. That's when I really saw 'em getting into trouble, back in '87, when we had that first [furlough]. Then we came back, they had union meetings and they explain about the cutbacks and stuff. And my wife and I, we moved up to Mauna Kea Ranch. She got a job up there. So get houses. This was in '88. We stayed there couple months, then we got a plantation house in Pa'auilo. A duplex house. Then again that same year, '88, they had another [furlough]—'88 or '89. And that was pretty big. Was couple months kind, I think.

WN: By layoff you mean no workers for couple months?

DG: Yeah, was like a furlough. Then they started saying that they going start cutting back on the work force. That was a big write-up in the newspaper. They going cut back 800 workers, or 400 workers I think was, in the work force. So they had all kind meetings. We had to go up to the office and they was going right down the list on who going where, and was one big mess. I mean, I was driving tractor and get this next guy that got bumped from his machine. He came---he knew what to do on my tractor, so he came and bumped me. I mean he used to drive 'em, but not actually do the job—was different the way they used to load the [cane], so they no could really do 'em. Was one big mess.

Then from there I used to go to one job where I bump this guy and, oh. Was one real---I mean friends became enemies and was really hard the first time. 'Cause we never really like do that, but everybody thinking of their job and the house especially. You know, where we going? We was worried that if we get laid off, we not working, and we lose our homes and stuff.

WN: Oh, so not just lose job but you thought . . .

DG: Yeah, we thought we'd lose the house too. And that time we had only one duplex, and I was working my way to get one bigger house, right? That's the house we stay now. So after I say, "Well if I have to go back to knapsack sprayer, I going back." And this was how many years after. You know, thinking of what you *wen* work hard for.

WN: How many dollars pay would that have been cut, at that time?

DG: About—what was I making?—maybe about dollar-something pay [cut], you know, I think. 'Cause that was one grade five job that I was doing. In fact, grade four was only couple cents [less] in fact, that time. Was only like one grade up. But still, the idea of what you doing. Had to go back and pack that thing on your back and start spraying again. Oh no. But you know, was job. Everybody was out there for save their job. Even some of the lady workers that was with us—old-timers—they was getting bumped too. So they was thinking, even them, they said, "If we have to go back to carrying the pump. . . ." So, oh no. Felt sorry for them.

WN: During the furlough time, how you guys make ends meet?

DG: Ho, was pretty hard too 'cause we seek welfare help and was getting hard time to get. They was giving us bad time telling us, "You know, this is only furlough." And we could collect [unemployment insurance], but even so, you know what I mean? Was the idea, you know, of just collecting. We could make more. And being right around the holidays, was hard. But we made ends meet. We couldn't work, 'cause was only one temporary thing. So we couldn't go out and find a job you know, wouldn't make sense. But other than that, was pretty hard. My daughter was born that time. And then the second time when we was getting the bumping, you know that cutback, my son was already born. That's what really made us worry. And just I was working that time. My wife wasn't working.

WN: So how many people you actually had to bump?

DG: Gee, you know, hundreds was getting bumped. Bumped off their jobs. And what it end up coming to was this guy, he had like twenty-five years [seniority], guy couldn't do the job. He told me that he's sorry for bumping me. I said, "No." I told him, "Ey, *Táta* no worry." Was this old Filipino guy.

He said, "No, you know what? You can have 'em." He told the boss, "Give the boy the job 'cause I older."

I said, "No, no, no. It's not your fault."

Then he say, "No, no, no. Just give the boy the job. He work all these years hard for be where he *stay* now. He can have 'em. I go quit." He said he going take the layoff. 'Cause they had guys who volunteered to get laid off. 'Cause already they had homes already. They owned homes, so they was willing to take that.

WN: So the old-timers, they knew that even if they get laid off they can stay in their house?

DG: Yeah, the first time we never know, you know, until the old-timers, then they found out that they cannot throw you out 'cause you never quit voluntarily.

WN: Oh, I see.

DG: So some of the guys that got laid off, in a way, they kind of got a good start whoever got the houses. 'Cause they had house already, and they took the layoff, and they had one chance for go look for other jobs already. But wasn't the idea for me. I could have done that too 'cause I had house. So I could have took the layoff too and know that I still get my house. I was thinking, nah, that's not the idea. The idea is we was brought up this way, in the lifestyle. I not going just, "Okay, I no need the plantation. You guys can keep 'em, I going start looking for another job."

So after that, they did their cutbacks, they called us back to work. I worked in the field for another year, and I applied down in the factory [i.e., sugar mill].

WN: Haina?

DG: Yeah. That was 1990 I think. Yeah, 1990 I worked down there. I had got a job as a factory relief worker in the mill.

WN: That was an open job?

DG: Yeah, was an open job; was a grade five job. Long time the guys used to tell me. "Eh, why you no come in the mill?" You know that's the last [section of the plantation] going close if [the company shuts down].

So I say, "Yeah, okay. Okay." So I applied in the mill, and I stayed right through until. . . . What they had? I wonder if they had one other layoff that time? Oh, was the time, 1990—when was that hurricane?—[September] 1992 eh? 'Iniki. We got activated for [Hawai'i] National Guard. We had to fly to Kaua'i. So we was there a couple weeks, and we got the word that Hāmākua Sugar [Company] filed for bankrupt.

WN: While you was on Kaua'i?

DG: Yeah, while we was on Kaua'i. So one of the supervisors that was here, he used work on Kaua'i before he came to the plantation. So he flew back to check on his place, and some his family or whoever, whatever he had there. And then he came to the place where we was stationed. He came to the place we was stationed, and he told us, "Eh, you folks heard the news?"

I said, "Yeah, what going happen? What, we going lose our job?"

He said, "No, no, no. You folks don't worry. You folks gonna get your guys' jobs back."

So when we came back, then we realized the situation. That was the first bankruptcy that---they filed that Chapter 11, bankruptcy.

WN: So '92.

DG: I think, yeah, was in '92 when I first heard about 'em, then.

WN: Before I get into talking about the closing, you said about the bumping, "friends became enemies." Was that really the situation?

DG: I mean, not where they wanted to fight, but just like, wow, feelings got hurt, like. But after they came to realize that it's not your fault. Everybody came to the conclusion like, "Okay, that's all right." 'Cause everybody was like, dog eat dog kind when came to that point. You know like, "Eh, I going get that guy."

Then, "I not doing this for make trouble, but I get family." Then like I said, came to the point where everybody realize that it's not their fault.

WN: Was there any disagreements as to, "Eh, you bumping me, but you cannot do my job."

DG: Yeah. That's what I---even I myself thought that 'cause, the trainer came out. He said, "Eh, you gotta get off the machine."

I said, "Why?"

He said, "'Cause this guy get more seniority than you, and you gotta go."

So I sat right there and I watched that guy do my job. He came and he was doing the job and he couldn't—they used to do the same kind job but, the operation of the machine used to be different. Instead of dumping the cane into the planting machine one way, used to spin 'em one different way, our side. 'Cause had like 'O'ōkala section and Honoka'a section. And 'O'ōkala section was different. That's the guy that came down and he told the trainer and the supervisor that he cannot do the job.

WN: And that guy was from 'O'ōkala?

DG: Yeah. He said, "Let this boy keep his job. I cannot do the job."

He [trainer] said, "Why? What you mean? It's the same kind job." And you know, came to the point where—'cause I could see their point—they was trying to explain to the guy, "You got twenty-five years. This guy get only ten years that time. Why you cannot?"

He said, "No, no, no. Just let him go [keep his job]." Then I felt sorry for the guy. Could see the tears in his eyes, you know what I mean?

I kept thanking him. (He) said, "Nah." And kept going on and on for he keep 'em.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: So how you felt when the guy was trying to do your job? What was going through your mind?

DG: I was thinking, what I going do? I was pretty much cool. I understood the first time, 'cause I knew wasn't his fault. You know what I mean? That everybody just gotta go through the same thing. Then my last result was I cannot go [work] on the machine [i.e., heavy equipment], 'cause people on the machine got more seniority than me, ladies and all the guys. So they was all telling, "Oh, eh, you gotta go knapsack [sprayer]."

I was like, "Well, if I gotta go knapsack, I go knapsack." I guess that's when came right to the day before, I had my boots, I brought my boots already. I had took off all my things from the tractor. And then I had my rubber boots for go back sprayer the next day. And I came work, and I jumped on the truck, the herbicide truck. Then I heard the guys looking for me down at the labor stand. He was calling for me and I was, "Hey, what's up?"

And they say, "Oh, come. You go back to your job."

I say, "Oh, why? How come?"

They said, "Oh, the guy give 'em up. He said he no like do your job, for give 'em back to you." And I was the last guy on the tractor, so. So after that, that's when I went back.

WN: So at that time, you felt happy? Or you felt kind of bad?

DG: Yeah, I felt kind of happy, but sad for what was going on with the system already, 'cause, like I say, I could see 'em coming down already, going down from way back. And I was saying, "Oh, no, *stay* getting more worse and worse, this place." That's when they said that they was going eliminate field operations already. So that's when they started [to] stop planting cane and started getting only one crew. Some of the guys, they went to driving truck, some of the men. So just the ladies sticked it out. 'Cause what else they going do? Would be hard for them go [work] in the mill. They no like go in the mill. 'Cause they no like work the shifts. That was always my idea, too. I no like go in the mill before, 'cause I was spoiled with the daytime and the weekend off.

WN: The mill was like three shifts? Graveyard and all that?

DG: Yeah, day, graveyard, and swing.

WN: And when did you find out that even if you lay off voluntarily or leave and go find another job, that you could stay in your house?

DG: Was right after that, you know, like (chuckles) the year after, right after I went to the mill. And said, aw shucks, if got the layoff, I wouldn't lose my home. 'Cause when I moved there, right before I went to the mill, I got a big house down in Pā'auhau. From Pa'auilo—I was living in the duplex, so I got a house back in Pā'auhau. So the guys was asking me, with all the houses open, how come I like go Pā'auhau? So I said, "Eh, I was brought up down there. It's a nice place. I used to always like that place."

And they said, "Yeah, but Haina, you going work down the mill, it's right down the road."

I said, "Well, Pā'auhau is like only five minutes away." (Chuckles) But the main idea, my thinking was I like live down there [Pā'auhau] 'cause that's where I was brought up, and I knew some of the people, the old-timers down there. But, yeah, after that time, about like a year after, I found out. (Chuckles)

WN: You were saying that you didn't want to just leave sugar, even if it meant . . .

DG: Yeah.

WN: . . . maybe a higher paying job someplace.

DG: Yeah, I mean, I remember them trying to figure out all kind ways to keep 'em going. But who was going to plant the cane already? They eliminated all the machines. That's when I knew already, when they started eliminating the field operations. That's when they told me if I going take the layoff. So I said, "Well, I going try look for another job," 'cause I was worried about my house, where I was going, you know. Cannot be going back to the apartments and all.

WN: But even after you found out that you could stay in your house, you still wanted to stay sugar?

DG: Yeah, I still wanted to stay. 'Cause had hotels opening. So what I was gonna do was try see if I could get one job and then hang on, but I said, "Ahh, I just going wait, then. Just stick it out right through is good enough." So that's what I did. I just stayed.

WN: Okay, so about 1992 time you heard about the closings, yeah?

DG: Yeah.

WN: How did you feel at that time? I mean, at that time, is that when you said, "Oh, no way sugar's going continue"?

DG: They had lot of rumors going on that they going plant again. So I was thinking, nah, how can? They sell a lot of the equipment already. (Chuckles)

WN: By the time you went [Hurricane] 'Iniki, [Hawai'i] National Guard work, you were [working] in the mill . . .

DG: Yeah, I was in the mill already. I went there [mill] in 1990, I think was. 'Cause I was there the last four years of the final harvest. Then came the year after. [Nineteen] ninety-three, they started talking about 'em already. You know, that within the year, they going shut down the plantation. So everybody was thinking, oh, what they going do already. And they was all thinking about loans, how they going pay off their loans. And they had all kind stuff going on, like where we can get help (chuckles) and who would help us. All kind meetings, just for update. Update, update, every . . .

WN: Who called the meetings?

DG: Was the union. The union used to always call the meetings. And they had some company kind [meetings]. Used to be right in the mill, right in the welding shop, first thing in the morning, all the departments used to get 'em, or used to just call and explain to them what going on.

And the funny part, the mill started giving trouble already. Yeah, so that was kind of costing the Morgans expense like that. So it was pretty hard. Lot of times, we used to just stop one—like used to have four mills in that one factory. So when one of the mills go down, used to just bypass 'em and go through the next, 'cause expense-wise and stuff. And they used to do lot of machinery work. Machine their own stuffs, but after a while, certain time had to send 'em to Hilo, the iron works, that's why (chuckles) used to cost big bucks. Just for transfer and get 'em done.

Then came that year, that's when we started getting meetings and lot of people started coming around. And was pretty sad already. That part was kind of sad, 'cause they was all talking. And I was talking to the old-timers, 'cause I used to work with the old-timers down in the mill. So lot of them took retirement, early retirement, or started. . . . Get all kind classes going on. But that time, we used to work, so I hardly had time for one attending of the classes. They had the nursing and landscaping, maintenance, and all kind other different classes for go through.

WN: So while you were talking about what you were going to be doing, what were some of your ideas or options of what . . .

DG: I was going in the regular [U.S.] Army. That was my first thought. (Chuckles) We decided, eh, we go pack up, we go to the Mainland. We go move to the Mainland. So I was going in the army. So I actually took the test and everything, but I missed 'em by a couple points. I couldn't understand why I cannot just transfer, since I active right now in the [Hawai'i National] Guard. But they said now is more strict. They like you take a written exam. But I said, "Yeah, but end up I gonna be doing the same thing." Fifteen years I *stay* in the guard, then how come all of a sudden, I need one test to get in there? So that was my first thought. Then after I couldn't get in there, then I got, what was? (Chuckles) Yeah, I was laid off for only a month I think, after the sugar company closed. I was looking for other jobs in the meantime, applications. They had that resource center. We still get 'em down here. So lot of guys was going through them to get jobs. Was explained to the people what kind jobs get offered, classes. And lot of guys got jobs and stuff, but was real hard. You know what I mean? 'Cause if you get four hundred people one time in there looking for the same job, hard, eh?

WN: You didn't take any training classes for anything?

DG: No, nothing, nothing. I ended up working like one month after for this tree company, cutting trees. But was only three months [that I worked there]. Then I was laid off again, and I went back to the resource center. Trying to figure out what kind stuff.

WN: What did they have at the resource center?

DG: They had---well, the only kind classes we had was just how to make resumés and stuff down there. (Chuckles) They offered some of the classes right there in the building. But basically, everything was where everything else was gonna be. They had limited time to apply for the classes, and limited [amount of] people to attend the classes. So every time when I used to apply for go, used to be too late, or gotta catch the next class. Some of the classes used to last two months, or three months—the nursing—or one month, six weeks. They had all kind cooking classes. Carpentry kind. It was kind of hard. I was kind of particular that time. Although they tell, "Eh, you gotta take anything," but still yet, you know, is for get adapted to what I gotta do.

WN: Now what about your father's taro and macadamia nut? Was that an option at all at any time?

DG: Yeah. Right around that time, I got a piece of land down Waipi'o. The old place where my dad folks used to have, my uncle folks. And he gave it up. So we started opening that up. After decided that I cannot get in the army, I decided, well, we gotta get that farm going. (Chuckles) So was pretty hard. We planted and stuff, but still, wasn't at the point where it's ready to back us up; if I lost my job, I can rely on that. Wasn't at that point. So was still pretty hard. We still getting 'em open. We harvested one time last year, and the income pretty good, you know, taro and all. So I had my friend opening up more of the patches, the rest of the place.

WN: But it's not enough to . . .

DG: Yeah, and then we used to go pick [macadamia] nuts like that, with our grandfather folks. But still, it's not---I mean, you working hard, and my mind was, oh, I sweating here for this much. And still, we used to do 'em, cause we needed whatever income we could get. And then we used to collect [unemployment compensation], so I could collect and get welfare. But just to go through the hassle and reporting and getting all the paperwork every month and stuff, getting disgusted, so.

WN: Plus you don't have the medical, like that.

DG: Yeah, that part hard, eh? We had to get that QUEST [state health] program. And everything was all through help kind. There's nothing through our work or job benefits. Like the medical, that was my main concern, too, the medical part and stuff.

WN: Okay. So what are you doing now?

DG: I work [as a] security guard down at Mauna Kea [Beach Hotel]. A little over a year now, just made a year in December [1996]. So about a year and a month.

WN: What are your hours?

DG: Right now, three to eleven [P.M.]. It's eight hours, forty hours a week. So not too bad. I make $9.00 an hour. (Chuckles) I mean, for what we do, it's pretty good money.

WN: How long does it take you to get over there?

DG: About forty-five minutes. I no go too fast. I leave early. I leave here like 1:30, so that I can get one good drive. And I try to beat the (Waimea School traffic). If I up there before 2:15, then not too bad. 'Cause that place can get. . . . (Laughs) Up there, busy can get. But take me about forty-five minutes, drive.

WN: So how does that commuting and working so far away from your house, how does that affect you folks, your family?

DG: Right now, working out pretty good. The only thing, my kids, I hardly see 'em, cause I kind of sleep in in the morning before they go school, and by the time they get back from school I gone again. When I get back from work, I no see them. But sometimes, I try to get up in the morning as early as possible, so I can see them. But still, that limited time. But other than that, it's not too bad. The affect on us is not too bad.

WN: What about your community, where you live now? Do you know a lot of your neighbors and things like that?

DG: Yeah, I mean, the majority of them, I know. Get one guy, he live next to me, he not working yet since the plantation closed. I can see he getting 'em pretty rough, but he himself has to make a point to go out, yeah? And try find a job. But I guess (chuckles) he enjoys what he's doing.

WN: He gets welfare and all like that?

DG: I don't think so. He was collecting and getting some help, but they used to always check, make sure. They had that employment service going on. So he had to kind of report to that and make sure that you making an effort (chuckles) to look for a job and you had a "no" answer or a "yes" answer.

But at work, we still talk about the plantation. Although we getting it easy there [Mauna Kea Beach Hotel] we used to sweat at the plantation, but still we used to enjoy what we used to do. That was the funny part. And the lifestyle we working now is real different, especially at the hotel. They really strict, yeah? Plantation, you get caught sitting down or *talking story*, eh, the supervisor comes there *talk story* with you. (WN laughs.) He used to say, "Ey, make sure you go watch your job." But like now, they catch you sitting down and not doing nothing, you gotta really be up on your toes and stuff. Like I said, they used to be tight, plantation style, the boss. Everybody knew each other within the community and the plantation.

But we still talk about 'em and stuff. "Eh, you remember, used to be so fast to reach home." 'Cause me and Geraldo [Guerrero], we was doing the same. . . . When he was working [plantation], I was like his relief man. So we was working in the same area. So now, we work down there [hotel], we *stay* carpool sometime, going work. And I tell, "Hey, Junior, remember when I used to come pick you up, used to be right down the road, eh?" He live Haina Camp, that's why. (WN laughs.)

"Ahh, really, now, ho! One hour, more, no? Ten o'clock, we leaving. Before, ten o'clock, we can still sleep, eh?" Graveyard shift. Get up like 10:30 and stuff.

I tell, "Yeah, that's how, no, nowadays."

WN: Plantation days, everybody lived same place, they worked same place, so the families know each other.

DG: Yeah.

WN: So now it's changed, eh?

DG: Yeah, yeah.

WN: Do you find that it's not good for the children? Is there more crime and things like that?

DG: Yeah, I mean, seem like the kids nowadays, they don't know what to do. Like we used to go make trouble like that, you know, *kolohe* kind. Go the neighbor's house, and go steal [fish] when they not home and I used to deliver paper. Eh, go put the fish net in the newspaper bag. (WN laughs.) Until today, the guy tell me, "Eh, you the guy used to come my house!" (WN laughs.) That whole time.

Tell, "No, no, no."

"Yeah, I saw you. The neighbors used to tell, you and the Enanoria boy used to come (WN chuckles) get you guys' nets."

WN: What you did with the fish net?

DG: Scoop that black mullets, small ones, and the *kois*, the small *da kine*. But that was the only kind we used to do. Not the kind vandalism or, you know. Sometimes we used to go turn on the water and shoot stuffs like that, but nothing to damage the place. Just good fun kind, eh?

But yeah, the affect I see now, I mean, the kids—even the camps now, you get all kind people. I mean, I even worry where my kids go, you know, when they ride bike and stuff like that.

WN: You mean you don't know everybody in the camp anymore.

DG: Get lot of outsiders that moved in the camp. So they get friends now that come out, and gee, some of them you don't know where they come from. You look at them, "Wow, where this guy came out from?" (Laughs) You know what I mean?

One time I see---like my kids was riding bike and they came home, they told my wife, "Oh, had one guy with one bicycle," he was riding around and he had one mask on. And hey, the guy kind of weird, you know. They got scared. So even my kids, they kind of cautious. Not like before, when we were small. Like I say, I could stay home alone. Nowadays, no way I would leave my kids alone or let 'em do what I did. Even for go play down in the gulches is real spooky now. I wouldn't let them, allow them. You like see them brought up the way you was brought up, but like I say, no more the plantation anymore. When had the plantation going, my kids used to always watch the cane trucks pass by the house. When I was working in the mill, my wife used to always come, and [they] used to sit and park up on the hill, before, above the yard. They used to watch everything. And I used to be waving to them from the mill. (Chuckles) They could always come. I mean, like I say, to me, I mean, they was pretty mellow, the supervisors. Even up until the plantation closed, they was understand[ing]. You know, if the family wanted to come, I could take them walking around the mill, or used to take them riding on the tractors, like that, before. But. . . .

WN: Okay, and when you were growing up, you never locked the doors, you just came in. You didn't need a key, eh?

DG: Yeah, that's why up until now, we get that habit where, you know, can just leave the doors open, I mean unlocked. But now, (chuckles) you know what I mean? Ho, the kind people come over to my neighbor's house, oh yeah, we lock the doors, even our car doors. Before, you could leave the keys in the car, and dig out. Sometimes still get that habit and my wife tell me, "Ey, you left your keys in the truck. You better go get 'em."

I say, "Nah, nobody. . . ."

She say, "No, you better go get 'em because the kind people that been coming around, you don't know." So.

Now, like I say, plantation before, when we was small, we used play, and we could go to the neighbors' house and drink water. You know, we walking and we riding and *stay* so far, we used to go to their gardens and drink water out of the pipes, and stuff. And they no used to bother. They could be right there, they tell, "Ey, boy, make sure no forget turn off the

water."

"Oh, okay," tell. "Yeah, thank you."

I mean, you know the old Filipino men, used be called "*Tátas*," they call that, or uncles. So we used to go over there and they used to be cooking and stuff, and we could go right up to the house. They used to tell, "Ey, boy, come. You like eat?" But now, the neighbors, they not as tight. I mean, we all know each other, but the closeness of the community is not like before.

WN: Seem like in the days when you were young, the neighbors were there for a reason, I mean, they came to work on the plantation. But now, what, people are just coming in, and then maybe working someplace [else] or . . .

DG: Yeah, yeah. So very few old-timers get down by where we live, the camps. Some of them, they no remember me already, 'cause after all these years, then I move down there. (Chuckles) I get my own kids already. And then, "Ey, whose boy you?" And I remember them 'cause we never going forget them. So they always *talk story*. And only whoever was working in the plantation, then they remember me, the old-timers, when us was small.

Because (chuckles) that guy that we used to go steal fish, he was one field mechanic. So when my tractor used to broke down, [he'd say] "Hey, you see this boy, he used to (chuckles) come my house and scoop all my fish."

I tell, "Ey, Masa, no talk like that, you."

(Laughter)

DG: Now we can sit back and kind of laugh about 'em, but like I said, we no used to broke anything. [Masa] tell, "What you used to do with all that fish?"

I tell, "Oh, we used to just keep 'em."

WN: You know the last [i.e., final] harvest, the last day [September 30, 1994], you know the parade and everything, you participated in that?

DG: Well, we had national guard that weekend. But I was there, (pause) I was there on that last *da kine*. Yeah, my wife folks came down. I was there that day, the day shift. And what I thought was the last cane coming up through the mill. And what we did is, the cane, they ended up grinding up through the night because the mill (chuckles) end up broken and stuff, so lot of guys just stood there. I never like leave, you know what I mean? Came to the point where I never like leave, 'cause I had to go for national guard drill that weekend. Then we was all talking and stuff. And then me and my friend, right before we went home, I took one picture of him, and stuff like that. Then we took picture together. Yeah, I took lot of pictures, you know, of the mill. So I put 'em in one small little album of the whole operation, in fact, from planting and stuff from before. And, yeah, we was there for all that, but not really participated in the parade and stuff, but we took some videos. And had lot of people. That's the first time that—had more people for that than when get one regular parade. I mean, the whole town was packed with people.

WN: How you felt that day?

DG: Oh, kind of sad. We cried. Even the time the last cane came up. Sometimes I look at 'em and put the lump in the throat. Like had some guys come down and interviewed us to put the video together. I used to always hear talk like, "Ahh, the younger guys, these guys, they no care." They used to come up to us and tell us, "You know, how come you folks not out looking for job?" or "How come you folks still here?" kind [of questions].

So I gotta explain to them, I tell, "You know, I see you guys work thirty, forty years." Like the guy I was working with, he was working forty-four years. So I told 'em, "You know, the guys, they no understand." The way we was brought up, we was brought up through plantation lifestyle. We see plantation right through our lives, the way we was brought up. We always wanted to work for the plantation, you know, drive truck or drive tractors. So I told 'em, "For see this thing just put away on the side is really hard to accept," I told 'em. "Even for us, being the younger generation."

So the guy was surprised, he said, "Oh, okay, okay. 'Cause I was wondering why you folks hung on, and you folks young. Why you guys never try go school and stuff?"

So I said, "Well, there's something that you always wanted, and there's something that you feel that you had accomplished. You work."

And then just lately, my wife and I, we went after the—I was talking to my brother-in-law 'cause they was giving out the albums, right?

WN: Yeah, yeah.

DG: That they put together.

WN: Oh, *The Final Harvest:* [*The Hāmākua Sugar Company, 1869–1994,* by P. Ernest Bouvet]?

DG: Yeah, The Final Harvest one. So I went down. That time they was just breaking 'em down, the mill, and stuff. So I look at that, ho, I shook my head. Then one other time we went down, then, ho, that thing was completely down. So I said, "Oh, oh," and started crying. Tears came down my eyes, and stuff. So I told my wife, "Oh, I real sad now. We go already."

She said, "Oh, real different, look."

I said, "Yeah, look all the places we used to work," and stuff.

Yeah, but when had that final harvest and all that, the parade and stuff, we was thinking that's the last time you going see cane trucks already. Especially all down this side, the coast down this side. And you never going hear 'em, you know, the whistle blow, the steam blow. Could always hear 'em from way up here. You could hear the steam going off or the whistle.

WN: Well, for you it was more than just a job, yeah?

DG: Yeah. That's why came to the point where guys was there just for the paycheck, and us was

there with the heart and soul, you know what I mean, go working, trying to save the—trying to get 'em going, when used to get broke downs and jams and stuff. That's why my wife used to tell me—before I used to come home all wet. I used to take extra clothes to work. She tell, "Why, you guys do that?"

I said, "Oh, you don't know, sometimes, what we do."

Then the last harvest time, I had to go to [national guard] drill. And she took videos of the cane coming up, the last of the harvest. And she said, "Ey, Honey, you know, I never realized, boy, what you folks had to do. It's kind of dangerous, no? And spooky, eh?" She said the way she watched the guys work and try to clean up, it's the exact thing we used to try do for try clean 'em up and get 'em going. Like I said, was more than just a job, just working there. It's just the feeling of how we was brought up. Even some of our kids.

WN: What about your father, how was your father that day?

DG: My dad, (chuckles) he was just asking me, he was kind of concerned about what we was going do. Yeah, I spoke to him, he said, "Well, Boy, that's how. Sometimes hard. And everything go down, like that." He was telling me, "Why no try apply down the hotel?" My step-mom works down the hotels.

So I tell 'em, "Oh, I don't know." (Chuckles) I was thinking, what I going do in the hotel? All this time we was getting our hands and feet dirty all these years, and all of a sudden we going to something like that? That's why plenty guys—had the Maui [plantation] one that had opened. That's one other option had, at Pioneer Mill [Company], or something. So that was another option. I almost went to that one if I didn't get the job down here. I was going to Maui, work for sugar. But I was telling my wife, I guess lot of guys now, I can see their point. Even for me, sometimes hard. We still like learn the plantation style, live the plantation way. But we try put it in our past already. That's why when the Maui one came up, I said, "Oh, I not going—I no like work for sugar." 'Cause kind of hard, already. Going be kind of hard for me to accept it, temporary again. You work there [Maui] couple months, off-season you come over here [Big Island]. And plus I get family, for be away from the family, hard, couple months. You can come home on weekends, but it's all on your own, you gotta pay [your way back]. But some guys went, and they liked it. They went back twice, and stuff. They took whatever they could, and figure that's the best for their family.

WN: What would you like to see for the future of this area?

DG: The future of this---well, if they (chuckles) if they can get jobs, though, I mean. I guess if they could get something for the community, if the community could try and get something where would be similar to what we used to do, then I think would be good. They was talking about making like one planting mill, you know, growing trees and stuff, or sell power and stuff. But I not sure. I not sure how that (chuckles) plan going. From what I understand, they still talking about 'em. Me and the guy Geraldo was just talking, "If open up, would be good for work back down here." 'Cause they was planning for make 'em where the old mill *stay*.

He said, "Yeah, really, no? Would be just like the old times, boy." Just going to work and. . . . If had something similar to the plantation operation, I think I would take—anytime I would take 'em back.

WN: You mean, living in the area, working in the area, raising your kids in that area?

DG: Yeah. That's why as far as moving away to work, was one pretty big decision, too, for us try decide. We had to think if that's what we really like [do], and stuff. At that time we was thinking, home was always going be home, but we figured, well, if we settled and everything and try see what we can do here. So, not too bad.

WN: What about your children? What are your hopes for your children?

DG: My hope for the children, I like them go school if they like, but. Sometime, the way they talk, they like do what we like do. And us thinking, "No, you folks don't want to go through what we went through, you know." I guess that's every parent's thought. But eventually, that's what going come to.

WN: If the plantation was still going—you was working plantation, and everything looked pretty good—would you have wanted your children to work plantation?

DG: Oh yeah, if they wanted. 'Cause my son (chuckles) and my daughter, like that, used to walk around and used to always tell me, oh, that's what they like do, and stuff. I mean, they was small, young at that time, two years younger that time. So even them, they kind of felt 'em. They felt the pain. Because my boy was making sad face. Till today they ask me how come the plantation had closed. You know by the old dump below Pā'auhau, get some old trucks, and the old garage still standing.

"Dad, how come the plantation closed?"

I said, "Well, we got into trouble and they no like plant sugar anymore. They no like plant sugar."

They still remember. Especially for my son, he was only like five years old that time. And he still remember a lot of the stuffs that go on. And my daughter, she remember plenty 'cause ever since she was born I was working in the field. So she kind of seen us going through rough times. She even try and help, and she tell, "Oh, what we going do?" They was worried that we not going get money already.

So I explain to them, "No worry, we going get help. And we going be looking for jobs."

WN: You feel that this Mauna Kea [Beach Hotel] job is something that you want to keep for a while?

DG: Yeah, like I say, it's pretty good. It's easy. Although the pay is good and we have medical benefits, if I can find something better, I always try to better myself.

WN: So you're more or less committed to staying here? You want to stay in this area?

DG: Yeah. As far as moving elsewhere, no. Pretty much right here. (Chuckles) For the kids, yeah. Like my son especially, if he would like, then he could work in the plantation if still had 'em. But if they could get better options or go away, go school or something. So even now we tell 'em, "You know, when you folks grow up, I hope you folks go school and move

away. Go move Mainland so that when Mommy and Daddy come for visit, we get someplace for go," you know what I mean?

WN: (Chuckles) Yeah.

DG: "We can stay here. Then you guys like come visit, home (will) always be home. You guys can always come home. But if us, we like go vacation, we can just go and visit." So they always laughing. (Chuckles) My daughter always talk about what she like be. So we always encourage them, tell them, "See, you folks gotta study in school. Study. You folks gotta study hard so you guys learn, and do all kind stuff for the future." My son is saying he like go in the army. I think he going end up going in the [military] service or something, if we still there. 'Cause no matter what, he always into the helicopters. So I said, "Boy, if you—either that or be one pilot, or something." He like jets and helicopters that why. So I said, "Well, then you better study so you can fly one of those one day. You can be up there flying with them."

WN: Well, okay. I think that's about it. Before I turn off the recorder, you have anything else you want to say?

DG: No, just thanks, thanks for the interview.

WN: Thank you. Thank you for your time and . . .

DG: It was real good, yeah.

WN: I wish you folks well.

DG: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

THE CLOSING OF SUGAR PLANTATIONS:

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